

U.S. Consulate General Vladivostok Highlights

March 2012

Broadway Jazz Sizzles in the Russian Far East



At the concert.

On February 28-March 6, Broadway jazz band "SoulJaazz," led by Ty Stephens, toured the Russian Far East, sweeping audiences off their feet with Ty's amazing stage presence and mesmerizing Broadway music. The tour was a part of "American Seasons in Russia" and was organized by US Consulate in Vladivostok and Primorye Regional Philharmonic Hall. The SoulJaazz tour, which began in Khabarovsk, continued in Vladivostok, Nakhodka and Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy with press conferences, master classes, jam sessions, interviews, meetings with local public, and concerts. Encores and standing ovations were the norm at all concerts, and excited fans formed long

lines for autographs and photos with band members after concerts. The tour was particularly notable in that it included Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy, which is rarely visited by foreign performers due to its isolated location (nearly four-hour flight northward from Vladivostok), where the audience was particularly jubilant. The tour garnered extensive, positive media coverage.

Moscow PAO Dazzles Students in the Russian Far East



Mike Hurley makes a presentation at the Far Eastern Federal University.

From February 28 to March 1, Mike Hurley, Minister-Counselor for Public Affairs from Embassy Moscow, met with exchange alumni, students and administrators in Vladivostok and Nakhodka. At FEFU (Far Eastern Federal University) in Vladivostok, Nakhodka campus of VSUES (Vladivostok State University of Economics and Services), and Nakhodka Public Secondary School #7, PAO Hurley delivered a presentation entitled, "From USSR to Russia - View of an American Diplomat." Recalling his 40 years' experience of working and studying in Russia and the transformation of the country in the past four decades, he dazzled audiences with his fluent Russian and elicited endless questions. PAO Hurley also took part in numerous

other events including a one-on-one primetime TV interview, which will be reported separately.

Moscow PAO Takes Over Primetime TV, Explains “American Seasons”



During the interview.

During his visit to the Russian Far East, Embassy Moscow Minister-Counselor for Public Affairs Michael Hurley took part in a popular talk show “V Tsentre Vnimanija” (In the Focus of Attention”) produced by OTV Prim, one of the largest regional TV stations with an estimated audience of two million viewers. During the 30-minute, one-on-one interview with the popular host of the program, Minister-Counselor Hurley answered over 15 questions highlighting the role of cultural diplomacy in U.S.-Russia relations. Recounting personal experience and observations from his student days in Leningrad in 1972 and 40 years of studying and working in USSR/Russia, Hurley explained how cultural exchanges can relieve tension between nations and presented TV viewers with detailed information on his brainchild, the American Seasons in Russia, including the backdrop of the creation of American Seasons - the U.S.-Russia Bilateral Presidential Commission and its Working Group on Culture, Education, Mass Media, and Sports. OTV Prim broadcast the interview in its entirety on March 6, from 7:20 to 7:50pm.

Vladivostok CG Reaches Out to Public with International Women’s Day Message

Primamedia, the largest online news agency in the Russian Far East, asked Vladivostok Consul General Sylvia Curran several questions on the occasion of International Women’s Day and published the CG’s responses. CG Curran stressed the importance of promoting and celebrating women’s contributions in society. Drawing parallels between Mother’s Day in the U.S. to Women’s Day in Russia, CG Curran stated that they both remind us about the influence that women -- mothers, teachers, social or political leaders -- had on each of us individually and on our societies. Addressing over 20,000 Prima-media readers throughout the Russian Far East, CG Curran concluded: “I very much like the Chinese expression ‘women hold up half the sky’. Often, history celebrates the works of great men. There are very few women, however, who have not made a great difference in someone’s life”.

PA Vladivostok Opens New Frontiers in Partizansk, Port Vostochnyi



Dae Kim with a martial arts tournament winner.

On March 12-13, Vladivostok PAO Dae Kim visited Partizansk and Port Vostochnyi, in a first-ever visit by PA Vladivostok. He began his visit with a meeting with the Partizansk mayor and his six senior staff members, met with “Naidan” minorities, spoke to over 250 high school students, and met with journalists. In Port Vostochnyi, PAO Kim gave remarks at a martial arts tournament, awarded medals to the winners, and met with journalists. At Partizansk school #6, he spoke to 250 high school students from 10 schools, where excited students, most likely meeting a diplomat for the first time, gave the PAO a rock star treatment. The mayor’s office had arranged

10 buses to transport students to school #6 to listen to the PAO's presentation. The principal of the school commented that it was the first visit to the school by an American diplomat in her 20 years' tenure. The city administrators and educators suggested another program visit, which PA Vladivostok has already begun to plan. Partizansk is a city of 46,000, a three-hour drive northward from Vladivostok. Port Vostochnyi is a small port town, 30-minute drive from Partizansk.

CG and PAO Are Judges at "English Olympiad"



PAO Dae Kim serves as one of the judges.

On March 14-15, Consul General Sylvia Curran and PAO Dae Kim participated in the opening ceremony of the annual "English Language Olympiad," where more than 600 secondary school contestants from 22 schools in the region compete in fields of English language and American history and literature. The CG gave remarks to hundreds of cheering students who waved the American flag. The CG and PAO then served as judges in American history and literature contests. The event was organized by Lingua-Plus Education Center in the Palace of Culture in Artem and garnered extensive media coverage.

Consul General Greets U.S. University Representatives, Russian Academics



CG Curran greets guests at her residence.

On March 24, 2012 Vladivostok Consul General Sylvia Curran hosted a reception for more than 40 guests in her residence. The event was held in honor of admissions officers from five U.S. universities who were in town to participate in an education fair and was attended by prominent academics from several local universities as well as staff and volunteers from EducationUSA. The education fair, which was co-organized by U.S. Consulate General Vladivostok and EducationUSA and took place at Vladivostok State University of Economics and Services, was the first-ever such event with participation by admissions officers from U.S. universities.

PAO Lauds Low-Cost, High-Tech Education

On March 28, 2012 Vladivostok PAO Dae Kim took part in the first video conference session of a course on International Law and Business at the Law School of Far Eastern Federal University (FEFU), giving opening remarks to approximately 20 FEFU law students and approximately 20 American students via video conference. In his remarks, PAO Kim lauded the low-cost, high-tech mode of education for increasing access to new ideas, insights and people, which enriches all participants. The course, which will convene four days a week until May 2012, will link FEFU with University of Wisconsin - Madison once a week, enabling students from each university to hear lectures and conduct seminars via video. Approximately 20 students from each university are enrolled in this unique course.

Consulate Officer Touts Visa-Free Travel to Guam



Guam delegation in Vladivostok.

This week a delegation from the U.S. Territory of Guam visited Moscow, Khabarovsk and Vladivostok. The delegation included Guam Senator Tina Rose Mun-a Barnes, representatives of the Guam Visitors Bureau, and representatives of the Guam business community. While in Russia the delegation launched their Russian language website, www.visitguam.org, and gave presentations to travel industry representatives. U.S. Consulate Political/Economic Officer Elizabeth MacDonald spoke during the presentation in Vladivostok about the new U.S. law that allows Russian citizens to travel visa free to the U.S. Territories of Guam, Saipan, and the Northern Marianas Islands. Russians may stay up to 45 days on Guam, Saipan, and the Northern Marianas Islands without a U.S. visa. The Guam Visitors Bureau looks forward to welcoming their Russian neighbors to their beautiful, warm Pacific Island. Representatives of the Guam Visitors Bureau will be back in Vladivostok for the Primorye Tourism Seminar in May, and they look forward to telling more people from the Russian Far East about Guam.